

A Regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on January 16, 2007 beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Town hall. Mr. DeNapoli was absent. The following members were present.

Joseph Denneen, Chairman
Chris Timson, Clerk
Michael Caron
Catherine Winston

Also present:
Michael Boynton, Town Administrator

Mr. Denneen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.,m

7:30 Walpole Youth Soccer Association

Mark Gallivan and Dan Merriken representing the Walpole Youth Soccer Association appeared before the Board to report on their desire to swap a piece of Town owned land off Mylod Street with a private piece of land. They are looking to use the land on Mylod Street for a new field and ask the Board to support an article on the warrant to accomplish this land swap.

Mr. Gallivan reported that there are approximately 1,000 players in the Fall and Spring seasons with over 75 town teams. It is a volunteer run, self supporting organization. Mylod and Ellis are the major playing fields. They use Bird Middle School, Bird park and Fisher School as secondary sites. The Walpole Youth Soccer Association (WYSA) pays 100% of the maintenance and upgrade costs for Mylod and Ellis fields. Between regular maintenance and upgrades, the cost is about \$60,000

The WYSA did get favorable approval to lease the town owned property by Town Meeting. They are trying to expand the Mylod Field and create a site plan that will allow for a second regulation size field. They approached the private landowner and he is willing to work with the WYSA as long as this would not impact his plans for use of his land. His lot had an existing house, and he plans to build a multi unit storage garage on the lot. He is willing to adjust his planned building shape to accommodate the land swap. He does not want to create another build-able lot

The WYSA has put forward a request for an article on the Spring Town Meeting Warrant and asks the Board to sponsor such an article.

Mr. Caron questioned if this land swap gives WYSA the ability to construct a new field?

Mr. Gallivan explained they would like to turn the fields sideways and get two full size fields. If we have the kids play sideways, the smaller kids play on the smaller field.

Mr. Caron noted that you are getting a new field but you also get more capacity.

Mr. Timson arrived at 7:40 p.m.

Dan Merriken explained that with a square configuration you can reverse your goals, so it does not require extensive repair. The objective is to swap, the hashed area and the town would take 13,000 s.f. of land and swap that with the private landowner Mr. Gulla. There have been questions if it creates additional lots, and it does not. It is LM zone. They will not have any further square footage. just a different configuration. This would have to go through site plan approval process.

Ms. Winston questioned if the Town's engineering dept had any input on this. Mr. Merriken stated: no not yet.

Mr. Timson felt that the swap seemed reasonable, the only issue he had, is a question that they answered. The Town would be swapping back land for frontage land where the homeowner ends up with more frontage, asked if the homeowner be willing to have a restriction for no more building lots.

Mr. Boynton explained that they did discuss that with him, Another element was some access to the sewer system. That would also help the soccer association down the road.

Mark Gallivan stated that it is so simple, people either like the idea or not.

Mr. Timson does not want to prevent Mr. Gulla from doing anything he could have done with his land if the swap had not occurred. Attorney Tom Brady, of Pruell and Brady, stated that when this came to his attention, we met with Mr. Boynton, and reviewed the deed the Town got from Omega associates. We are researching how the town acquired this piece of property. When Omega did deed it, they may have included a restriction in the deed, that the land is for Parks, schools and recreation. We are trying to get to the bottom of that. I have not yet dealt with Town Counsel.

Mr. Boynton stated that when they looked at this a week ago, if you look at everything, it did not look as if the land subject to the swap was part of the Tripartite agreement.

Attorney Tom Brady stated that any deed to the town has to be accepted by the Town. I am guessing that was part of the agreement during the settlement.

Mr. Boynton stated that if the town did not accept the deed of that land, than you can not lease it out. We are still researching it.

Ms. Winston questioned if Mr. Conroy, who is a Planning Board member and is present has any knowledge of this donation. Mr. Conroy stated that was put in as part of the original decision. Omega did give it to the Town.

Attorney Brady explained they want to get their article on the warrant. Mr. Boynton explained there is an article on the current town meeting warrant that is a place holder. The Soccer Association is asking the Board to endorse this article. If we need to do further acceptance of the parcel or amend the vote from last spring, that may require a separate article. The lease that was almost executed.

Ms. Winston felt if the Board votes to put this on the warrant, we could always reopen the warrant to place an article on it for acceptance of the land.

Mr. Boynton suggests doing it as separate pieces.

MOTION moved by Mr. Timson to be the sponsors of article 24, seconded by Ms. Winston, VOTED 4-0-0

8:00 Public Facilities Study Committee

Bill Ryan, Chairman of the Public Facilities Study Committee explained we were charged by your Board to come up with a new site for a combined downtown public facility station, the land downtown is very scarce. Two sites suitable, the first is the ballfield right out back of Town Hall. The members felt it could go on the ballfield and still accommodate the senior center. It would be tight. Parking would be lost at the senior center. There would need to be a widening of various driveways near the Town hall .

That location would give the fire department access to Blackburn drive and exit on to School Street. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of that site.

Mr. Timson noted that there is proximity to wetlands there. Mr. Ryan stated that it is the Committee's understanding that the 200 foot no build zone does not come into play it is

only 25 feet. Even though there is parking around the senior center there would be loss of Senior Center parking, but there would be an increase overall in the number of parking spaces.

Ms. Winston noted that on both Plan A and Plan B the Fire Station is demolished and the Blackburn hall stays. Mr. Ryan replied yes.

Mr. Caron asked if in their deliberations, they entertained the feasibility of tearing down Blackburn Hall. Mr. Ryan stated it had been brought up, if we remove Blackburn Hall, you would use more than the footprint and encroach on the land dedicated for the library.

Mr. Caron asked if it were feasible. If the Blackburn Hall was not there and you had a long building, you start at the existing fire station and go toward the Blackburn Hall or if you start where the police station ends and the fire department begins without the Blackburn Hall there. Mr. Ryan stated that it might fit.

Mr. Carrell the architect stated that tearing the Fire Station down could be costly. Where the building is proposed in both sites A and B you can keep both facilities open while under construction. It could cost over a million dollars to find them a temporary place.

Mr. Timson stated that he understand the cost of shutting down operations. Could the construction be staggered so that to tear down Blackburn Hall and start one building that the fire station portion of the new building is functional and then tear down the fire station.

Mr. Carrell strongly recommends they not consider doing this in phases. It becomes difficult. One part of the building would be used and one part would be new.

Mr. Ryan stated that Alternate Plan A would be less disruptive to the municipal parking lot than Alternate B. Ms. Winston supports Plan A.

Mr. Caron asked if the cost projections include the costs to relocate the playing field and soft costs. Mr. Ryan answered it does not include the relocation of the field, but does include the soft costs.

Mr. Boynton explained that Selectmen DeNapoli asked that no vote be taken until there is a full board. He did also make similar comments with respect to Blackburn.

Mr. Carrell explained the soft costs total is \$2.3 million.

Mr. Denneen noted the two pieces of correspondence one from the Fire Department and one from Police Department.

Mr. Timson asked if the Police and Fire Chief could speak to their opinions on the proposed site.

Chief Bailey stated, from the Fire Dept, plan A works very well. That seems to alleviate the congestion in the back area, better access to both streets. The 50 foot ramp is included in that. We are in favor of plan A.

Chief Stillman state that, proposal A works best for both departments. It does work as it leaves the parking alone. This works well. The letters were written previous to this last meeting. We needed to work out some details.

Ms. Winston asked why are there two fitness centers? Why can't they share one.

The Police Chief responded that you could have one, but you do not see that happen when new combined facilities are constructed. The Police Chief indicated that if you are going to vote against it because of two facilities then only have one.

Mr. Ryan explained that the combined fitness facilities have not worked well with police and fire.

John Conroy stated that the most cost effective way to build new police and fire stations is combined. It is the redundancies. If you need both building you build them together. As far as location, the logistics are still the same. On the long term two separate buildings are more costly. This alternate A proposal is about as simple and cheap as you can do. As far as Blackburn, you would have to relocate the recreation department and the credit union. As far as Alternate B, it can work. There probably would be some disruption on the site. It can work back there, either one works well, A works best but B will work as well. The other thing that came out, is diesel and gas. One thing that was discussed, you would not want that downtown you would be turning that into a gas pumps for the combined facility station. You would not want to do that near the public safety facility as it could jam things up. You could put pumps at the Lincoln Road landfill. Either way alternate plan A or B both would work.

Mike Caron, stated that he would like the building to fit aesthetically with the buildings in the area. People have asked me that we do something architecturally to make sure they work together. If this does goes through, and make sure they are compatible.

Mr. Boynton sate that , the final draft warrant includes two articles for the public safety building. This has not been voted you can keep them there or remove them. The project manager, we would have to have him on board. Articles 17 and 18 are there in draft form. If you chose to borrow all the funds necessary to build everything you would not need 18, if you want to break the project manager out and pay through free cash. We will remove draft article 18 from the warrant.

Mr. Ryan explained that the new facility would either be built with red brick or red block and be in character with other buildings.

8:30 p.m. Friends of the Walpole Community Athletic Complex

Representatives of the Friends of the Walpole Community Athletic Complex appeared before the Board and indicated that they are prepared to move forward with construction. Track and field phase to be complete in the spring. We would like to continue discussions to solidify a timeline, so construction can begin and to award a contract no later than April 1, 2007. We have raised about \$1.5 million. We have a number of things lined up and that will move us towards our goal.

Ms. Winston questioned how much money do they have in hand? They have \$700,000 including the grant and they have pledges of \$500,000.

Ms. Winston thought we were not going to allow a shovel in the ground until the money is raised.

Mr. Boynton explained that between the money in hand and pledges there is enough to complete construction without the lights. Mr. Boynton asked how concerned is the Board with the pledges being collected.

The representative explained the most notable pledge is the bank, and that has been committed once we get the project going. We have reengineered and taken the lights out. At \$1.2 million including pledges, we feel we are \$100,000 short in cash. We are asking tonight for in kind services to be considered as meeting this dollar amount. We see ourselves coming before you to update you as to where we are. Setting in motion speaking with School Committee, schedule, we want to move to the next level.

Ms. Winston, asked if here is \$700,000 which includes the grant and then \$250,000 from the bank and then \$250,000 in pledges? Can you make some arrangements to collect the pledges?

The representative responded that he does not know what kind of arrangements we can make. We are talking about a few individuals who are writing large checks.

Mr. Caron asked if there is a way to say all cash is due before a certain date . If you were going to start in April/May is it reasonable to ask the pledges to submit the cash in March. As long as you hold it in a bank account, then the money could be returned with interest if something falls through.

Joe Denneen, questioned the wiring for the lights.

The representative stated that given our timeline we thought this project would start last June. The Group has been cautious to work with these large donors. We have delayed conversations with the school department. We feel it is time to start those conversations. With your approval we will have the conversations and come back to you and let you know where we are.

Spring Town Meeting

Mr. Boynton noted there are 38 articles, of which a large number are street acceptances.

MOTION move by Mr. Timson to close the Spring Town Meeting Warrant as set forth in this draft, seconded by Ms. Winston, VOTED 4-0-0

Cathy's 5K, Run/Walk

MOTION moved by Mr. Timson that we approve the request to hold the 5th annual run as outlined, seconded by Ms. Winston, VOTED 4-0-0

Gift Acceptance

MOTION moved by Mr. Timson to accept the gift in the amount of \$25.00 from Antoinette Campagna for the Ambulance Gift Fund, seconded by Mr. Caron , VOTED, 4-0-0

1-12 Liquor licenses ceasing operation

Board noted that there are two liquor licenses that are not being used. Michele's has been out of business for two years and S.K.B. Liquors has been closed since June due to a fire.

Mr. Timson questioned if anyone is looking to obtain either of these licenses? There are currently (2) all alcoholic Common Victualler's licenses available.

Ms. Winston noted that on one of the establishments, they were trying to put a package together to sell the business. If we give them another 60 days we can see where they are. Should we ask both owners to come in and tell us.

Mr. Denneen suggested that we ask for an update in 60 days on Michelle's, and lets get something in from SKB in Thirty days to let us know where they are. The licenses have been renewed, and there is no pressing need as there is no shortage of licenses. We do not want to loose sight of them through.

Mr. Timson noted that there is a downside to proceeding to a revocation hearing; it could cost the town more money in litigation fees if they appeal the revocation.

Town Administrator update

Sex offender Legislation: There was a meeting today in which we discussed the issue of updating us on sex offender issues. There are over 20 bills on various aspects of this so they have the attention as Beacon Hill. What can we do as a community. The issue about signs. Working some type of neighborhood watch. One of the best things that could happen is to make this a topic of community meetings. The Library has agreed to post level 3 offenders. I think without Hank Moriana's diligence it would not have gone as far.

Budget Update: Everyone's budget came in December and I met with the Superintendent today. Trying to close the gap on the numbers. There are three key components missing from our projected budget. Health insurance, hope to have some direction, second is local aide, Budget will be in by the end of February despite not having direction on state numbers from Beacon Hill, Despite not having direction and state numbers from Beacon Hill, I have to give you the budget message in early February. There is likely to be a modest increase in Local Aide, Chapter 70. It would be beneficial to Walpole if the formula does not change. I will not feel comfortable until I see the numbers. We will stay in contact with DOE. Tri county is the third our enrollment has dropped. We pick up a less of a proportional share. Tri county is waiting for the projected numbers.

The number I am giving you is the projected deficit. I am waiting for a number from the Assessors. I need to look at ambulance receipts and the \$40,000 article submitted from the school department.

At the last meeting you asked about what we would like to see if there was an override. Mr. Boynton reviewed the municipal restorations. The current budget deficit as of today is \$1,069,939.00.

Mr. Boynton reviewed the projected FY08 override calculations. In addition we need to wean ourselves off using the prison mitigation within budget. Reviewed what it would cost a household for an override.

Mr. Timson noted that it is a bleak assessment and it underscores the need to increase revenue from commercial development. This is an initial assessment. Mr. Boynton explained he is looking at trying to identify a long term solution. There is no long term solution to this. Unless there is some scaling back, it has to be something across the board.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Timson said that in regards to increase revenue, I spoke to Don Walsh about getting information about vacant parcels on Route 1, catalog them and determine why they haven't been developed. He does not think we have had a response to our letter to Congressman Lynch. Should see if we can touch base with his office.

Ms. Winston indicated that there was difficulty finding parking in front of the Subway on main Street and would like to set up meeting with the Chief and the Downtown business owners regarding the parking. Mr. Boynton recently saw an aerial picture where there was parking on Main Street.

MINUTES

MOTION moved by Mr. Timson to approve the minutes of November 7, 2006 as set forth, seconded by Ms. Winston, VOTED 4-0-0

MOTION moved by Mr. Timson to adjourn at 9:35 p.m., seconded by Ms. Winston, VOTED 4-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Timson, Clerk